



# Lower Columbia School Gardens - Monthly Planting Guide

## APRIL

USDA Hardiness  
ZONE 8b

Estimated Last Frost: April 30  
Estimated First Frost: Oct 31

CROP	SOIL TEMP.	PLANTING DATE	SPACING	DEPTH	METHOD	FROM SEED TO HARVEST	NOTES
Beans, Runner	65 - 85	15 <sup>th</sup>	2 - 4"	1"	Seed	11 weeks	Plant near trellis/climbing structure April - May. Ideal for growing on a tee-pee. Harvest 4 - 6" tender pods or allow to fully mature and dry for fun, easy seed-saving. Beautiful seeds!
Cucumber	65 - 90	15 <sup>th</sup>	3 ft in garden	½ - 1"	Indoors	7 - 10 weeks	Transplant out at 3 weeks. May also be direct-seeded in June.
Dill	55 - 70	1 <sup>st</sup>	3 - 6"	¼ - ½"	Seed	6 - 9 weeks	Sow weekly April - June. Plant near cabbage and squash family and allow to flower/set seed to attract beneficial insects.
Flowers (out)	Borage, Calendula, Campanula, Mallow, Nasturtium, Nigella, Phacelia, Scabiosa, Zinnia						Sow throughout April - May.
Gourds	65 - 85	15 <sup>th</sup>	3 - 5 ft in garden	1 - 1 ½"	Indoors	12 - 16 weeks	Dry gourds for art projects and bird houses. Transplant out at 4 weeks. May also be sown into hills in late May.
Melon	70 - 85	15 <sup>th</sup>	4 ft in	½ - 1"	Indoors	9 - 13 weeks	Transplant out at 4 weeks. May also be sown outdoors in late May.
Parsnips	55 - 75	1 <sup>st</sup>	3 - 4"	½"	Seed	17 - 20 weeks	For Fall/Winter harvest. Sow throughout April - May with no fertilizer.
Pumpkins (ornamental)	65 - 85	15 <sup>th</sup>	3 - 5 ft in garden	1 - 1 ½"	Indoors	13 - 16 weeks	For carving and edible seeds. Transplant out at 4 wks. May be sown outdoors in late May. Plant pollinator-attracting flowers nearby.
Summer Squash & Zucchini	65 - 85	15 <sup>th</sup>	3 - 5 ft in garden	1 - 1 ½"	Indoors	7 - 10 weeks	Transplant out at 4 weeks. May also be sown outdoors in late May. Plant pollinator-attracting flowers nearby in the garden.
Sunflowers!	65 - 75	15 <sup>th</sup>	12 - 18"	½"	Seed	8 - 14 weeks	Sow every 2 weeks late April - early June.
Winter Squash (for eating!)	65 - 85	15 <sup>th</sup>	3 - 5 ft in garden	1 - 1 ½"	Indoors	12 - 17 weeks	Transplant out at 4 weeks. May also be sown outdoors in late May. Plant pollinator-attracting flowers nearby in the garden.

- **Start indoors in biodegradable pots:** cucumbers, melons, summer and winter squash, and pumpkin, then plant entire pot into garden around 3 weeks from germination. These plants (especially cucumbers) can also be trellised in the garden, allowing for easier harvest and healthier plants because of better air circulation.
- **Continue sowing indoors throughout April:** basil, ground cherry, and tomatillo.
- **Continue sowing directly in garden throughout April:** arugula, Asian greens, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, caraway, carrots, chervil, chives, cilantro, collards, fennel, kale, leeks, lettuce, lovage, parsley, snap + snow peas (look for varieties that are "enation-resistant"), potatoes, radishes, scallions, spinach, Swiss chard, and turnips.
- **Thinning:** 6-inch tall beets to 4 - 6" apart, 6-inch tall carrots to 2 - 4" apart, 4-inch tall radishes to 1 - 2" apart.
- **Hill up soil around green potato shoots** when they are at least 6 inches tall. *Do this every 3 weeks or so until harvest time.*
- **Transplant to garden mid-April (after hardening off):** broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celeriac, celery, kale, kohlrabi, leeks, lettuce, scallions, spinach, and sweet + storage onions. (Scallions can be transplanted to garden in groups of 6 and sweet onions in groups of 3).
- **Transplant to garden late April (after hardening off):** artichokes, and flowers seeded indoors during March.
- **Transplant to larger pots mid-April to late April:** basil (March-seeded), eggplant, ground cherry, peppers, tomatoes, and tomatillo.
- **Turn and care for compost regularly.**
- **Harvest time:** arugula, Asian greens, asparagus, brassica flowers, broccoli, cabbage, calendula, cilantro, fava leaves and blossoms, fennel, kale, lettuce, mint, mustard, parsley, radishes, rosemary, sage, scallions, sorrel, spinach, Swiss chard, and thyme.

